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EDITORIAL.

THE "Report of the Research Committee, appointed to Collect Evidence as to Glacial Action in Australasia" (Brisbane, 1895), and the Presidential Address of Professor T. W. E. David before the Australasian Association for the Advancement of Science (of like date) together with Professor David's recent paper before the Geological Society of London, on "Glacial Action in Australasia in Permo-Carboniferous Time," bring forth into fresh and collective form a large mass of data respecting ancient glaciation which merit the most serious consideration of students of the climatic phases of the earth's history. In some degree, to be sure, the facts are familiar to geologists, but the magnitude of the phenomena have not been so clearly and impressively set forth before. It is shown by detailed sections and by specific data of clear import that the Permian glacial phenomena of Australia, have great vertical as well as lateral extent. At Bacchus Marsh, for instance, there are at least eight successive deposits of well characterized glacial till, reaching an aggregate thickness of over 1100 feet. The whole section, including interstratified conglomerates, sandstones and shales, reaches 2000 feet. Six of the glacial boulder beds reach thicknesses ranging from 132 to 235 feet. From this it appears that the vertical thickness greatly exceeds that of the Pleistocene glacial deposits of like situations. The known localities range through 12° in longitude and 21° in latitude and reach north of the tropic of Capricorn. The number of discovered localities has already become large. Extensive striated pavements occur at different places. The scratched boulders are abundant and often large, reaching in one case a mass of thirty tons. In New South Wales a group of coal beds comprising from twenty to forty feet of coal occurs in the midst of the series.

These determinations do not rest upon the testimony of any single geologist or even a few geologists; they are the joint product of no less than twenty observers. In the light of these impressive phenomena, taken in connection with the extensive glaciation demonstrated in like manner in India and the less known phenomena of southern Africa, it is no longer our privilege to ignore or slight these most remarkable glaciations in our attempts to explain the origin of glacial periods. The agency assigned, it would appear, must be competent to explain very extensive, very prolonged and very much interrupted glaciation, at seemingly low levels, in areas that lap across the tropics on both the north and south sides of the equator. Before any hypothesis is entitled to popular propagation (except under due qualifications) it should frankly meet and fully satisfy these limital and most extraordinary phenomena.

T. C. C.